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Is the Peace Machinery Imperiled by the Far Eastern Situation?

discussed by

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SPEAKERS' TABLE

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Is the Peace Machinery Imperiled by the Far Eastern Situation?

MR. HERBERT L. MAY, CHAIRMAN

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: We are witnessing what we all hope is the last lap of a great international race of peace machines, all headed for Shanghai—three in number: The 1919 League model, a 55-Power machine; the 1922 Washington model, a 9-Power machine; and the 1928 Kellogg-Briand model, a 60-Power machine.

Unfortunately, from the start the Kellogg-Briand model has been handicapped by the failure of its makers to provide a set of directions for use. The race is a precarious one, particularly for those daring souls who are attempting the impossible task of trying to ride with one foot in each of three machines at the same time.

Needless to say, we are all interested in seeing one of the machines arrive at its destination at the earliest possible moment, and lest one of them arrive at any moment and embarrass us this afternoon in our discussion, we shall proceed at once with the question "Is the Peace Machinery Imperiled By the Far Eastern Situation?"

We shall hear two speakers, each for thirty minutes. The first speaker will be Dr. Herbert Adams Gibbons who was correspondent of the *New York Herald* in Turkey, Egypt, the Balkan States and France from 1908 to 1918. Since 1925, he has been editorial adviser to the Century Company. He covered the Disarmament Conference in 1921 for Harper's. He has recently returned from two years' travel in Asia and Africa.

He visited China in 1929, 1930 and 1931, and he is the author of many books including "Contemporary World History," "Nationalism and Internationalism," and "The New Map of Asia." It is a great privilege for me to introduce to you Dr. Herbert Adams Gibbons. Dr. Gibbons!

DR. HERBERT ADAMS GIBBONS

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Is the existing peace machinery imperiled by the events in the Far East? This is a clear-cut question. It demands an unequivocal answer. But a bald "Yes" or "No" cannot be given. For to do so would require our making two assumptions not warranted by the facts in the case. These assumptions are:

One. That the actions of Japan in Manchuria and at Shanghai constitute a violation of the Covenant of the League of Nations and of the Briand-Kellogg Anti-War Pact.

Two. That the creators of the League and the signatories of the Briand-Kellogg Pact have offered the world an automatically functioning peace machinery.

Now as to the first assumption: Many eminent Americans, and virtually the whole of the American press have condemned Japan, assuming her to be in the wrong both in Manchuria and Shanghai—and yet I do not hesitate to question their hasty judgment. Nor do I hesitate to declare that the attitude adopted by the other Great Powers and the lesser nations at Geneva has in each instance been dictated by considerations of selfish national policy. Their delegates have not arrived at an objective judicial verdict after a thorough and impartial examination of the facts. As a student of Far Eastern affairs, I know how complicated are all the problems of Sino-Japanese and Sino-European and Sino-American relations. The more deeply I go into these problems (they have been my chief study for several years), the more I am impressed with the difficulty in getting at the truth. Certainly one cannot form an opinion from press dispatches, or from propaganda statements of the protagonists. Nor can one form an opinion from the attitude of other governments, which is in every case dictated solely by considerations of national policy. When I think of the motives at work at Geneva determining the attitude of the Assembly delegates toward the events in the Far East, to speak of their representing the moral indignation of the world is poppycock.

Four of the Great Powers, including ourselves, are doing at the present moment in different parts of the world what Japan is doing in China. But wouldn't we be most surprised if some nation were to invoke against us, as Panama intended to do against the United States three years ago, the peace-preserving clauses in the League Covenant or the Briand-Kellogg Pact? Of course we all say that our particular case is different, and that there is no parallel. In the present Far Eastern events has not China, a member of the League, appealed to the League against Japan, another member? Has not China, a signatory of the Peace Pact, appealed against Japan, another signatory? However, the Japanese too maintain that their case is as strong, technically and morally, as ours, or France's, or Great Britain's, or Italy's, or Poland's in the peculiar difficulties, involving occupation of alien territory by armed force, that each of these States is facing.

This is an intelligent group of men and women before me. They represent the flower of New York's internationally-minded intelligentsia. Before believing that Japan had violated the Covenant of the League and the Briand-Kellogg Pact, you made an honest effort, did you not, to get the

facts about Manchuria? Or did you merely assume that Japan was wrong because her twelve thousand troops attacked the three hundred and twenty thousand Chinese regulars in Manchuria, in a plot to annex Manchuria to Japan? The world does not yet know just what happened in Manchuria, or why; and we are too near the event to judge either the wisdom or the legality of the new republic of Manchuria. We must remember that it took the Senate of the United States nearly twenty years to vote Colombia compensation for our part in creating the State of Panama. American public opinion has not yet, after a whole generation, been willing to admit that we were wrong in simply taking what we needed for our Canal. At Bogotá to-day the Colombians must be very much puzzled over our condemnation of Japan in Manchuria. How were we able to get the facts so quickly? How were we ready to denounce Japan so easily? Are we yet in a position to know whether or not she had justification, in accord with American standards of international morality, for what she has done?

Similarly the Mexicans are puzzling their heads over the complete change of American attitude in less than twenty years concerning the bombarding of a port of a country with which we were at peace. Then, when snipers fired on the marines we landed, American marines acted in self-defense; Japanese marines are brutes, we say. But at Vera Cruz the Mexicans did not have a German-trained army on the spot to oppose us, or we, like Japan, might have been compelled to dispatch an expeditionary force to finish what we had started. As late as 1916, we sent armed forces into a neighboring country with whom we were at peace under a general who was to distinguish himself in the World War. Our object was to catch a bandit without asking leave of the government of that country. Did the rest of the world threaten to boycott us? "Ah," you exclaim, "Wilson's action was perfectly justifiable, for Mexico City did not exercise administrative authority over Mexico, and we could not tolerate anarchy in a neighboring land where our investments were so heavy and where American lives were in jeopardy." The newspapers at the time said that Wilson did not go far enough. They had been talking war with Mexico for years. We went to war with Spain because we could no longer stand the disorder in Cuba where our investments had become important.

It seems all right, perfectly legal and reasonable, when it is a question of our own actions. It was all right for Great Britain and ourselves to send troops to Shanghai at the time of the last crisis, and to shoot up the Chinese on the Bund and in Nanking Road. It was all right for an American cruiser to bombard Nanking. It was all right for the French and British to send a withering machine-gun fire from the Island of Shameen across the little river to the Canton Bund five years ago—or was it only four—when Chinese by the dozen crumpled up and fell in the road,

many of them women and children. "There had been sniping," the French commandant said.

Now I want it to be understood by every person in this room that I am not condoning or trying to defend the Japanese at Shanghai, where they have made a sorry mess of things. But I know too much of recent Chinese history, in relation with Europe and America, to believe that the other powers are in a strong moral position to act as judges. And I know too much of the methods of the dealings of Occidental states with weaker powers, and the working out of their policies in China itself as well as in all other parts of Asia, to believe that other nations acting as judges would find Japan guilty of aggression against China in the present crisis.

My friends, the peoples of the civilized world cannot airily in 1932 brush aside their own past history, and refuse to accept responsibility for the deeds of their fathers. "It's different now," is not an answer. We Anglo-Saxons especially have always refused to be bound by a code, on the Roman model, in the administration of our laws. We judge guilt or innocence, motives, degree of provocation, wholly by precedents in our law courts. So who are we to judge Japan? When we see her following our own example all we can do is to strike our breasts and cry out, *"Mea culpa. Mea gravissima culpa."*

Not as Pharisees, clothed in our own self-righteousness; not as hypocrites, cloaking our real motives even from ourselves; but by becoming as little children shall we enter into the kingdom of universal peace.

To summarize my protest against the too easy assumption of Japan's guilt in the Far Eastern crisis, I would say:

One. We do not yet know the facts in the case.

Two. The methods of Japan, and her motives, as far as we can guess them, in dealing with China are too like our own, past and present, for the other nations to give a convincing moral verdict against Japan. We cannot either boycott or fight her (the two are the same or would quickly become the same) to give up her place in Manchuria and abandon her effort to retain and extend her trade with China.

Three. These being the facts, as I see them, in the Far East, the existing peace machinery is not imperiled by recent events there, because there is no proven necessity for its functioning.

And now to the second assumption.

When I was married here in New York nearly a quarter century ago at the old Marble Collegiate Church to a girl who still shares my ups and downs—she is in this room now—the parson said when he prayed over us,

"Oh Lord, don't let these young people expect too much of each other!" And that is the principal reason, I think, of our happy married life. If only the advocates of the League of Nations had adopted the same attitude towards their child in its stormy infancy, if only zealous lovers of peace had not called the Briand-Kellogg Pact, at the moment of its birth, the greatest document since the Sermon on the Mount, they would not be so alarmed and pessimistic now. They would not be setting so much store upon the absurd idea of boycotting Japan. Would they now lead us to war in their sincere but woefully-mistaken effort to keep us out of war?

Don't be amazed or indignant at my saying this. I abhor aggression and the killing of innocent civilians as much as anybody in this room. But we must not be under the sway of our emotions in judging the Far Eastern situation. Let us, I beg of you, return to sanity. The best way we can do that is to look into the dealings of European governments and the government of the United States with China during the past half century. In 1885, France was fighting China for nine months without being at war. Jules Ferry, beloved and honored statesman, let it be understood that Admiral Courbet was "out of hand." China appealed to the Powers against French aggression. France has kept the spoils. There are similar illustrations to be cited of Great Britain, Russia, Germany, the United States, landing and maintaining troops in China against the vehement protest of China and her appeal to the public opinion of the world.

And the only reason we have not been in the bad mess Japan has gotten herself into in the course of the last month is that our troops out there were not attacked in the way the Japanese troops were, and we did not have to save our face. We talk about the Orientals saving face! Every nation, when it comes to that, when her troops are attacked, believes in saving face in exactly the same manner.

Invariably the argument was made that there was no war or *casus belli,* and that we were simply maintaining order and protecting our nationals when China couldn't or wouldn't. If the argument was good for us, it is good for Japan. If there is no war or *casus belli,* do the League Covenant and the Briand-Kellogg Pact apply? Make no mistake about it! The economic boycott, even with full League sanction, means war—the meanest and cruellest and most fruitless war that could be imagined. Submarines and air raids take their thousands, poison gas and machine-guns their tens of thousands, but an economic boycott would mean the death of hundreds of thousands, possibly millions, and would bring ruin upon cotton-growers and silk mill factory hands and longshoremen and sailors of the boycotting nation. The idea is wholly indefensible from whatever point of view you regard it, and to those who advocate this nation joining with the League to coerce or punish Japan by boycott I say, "God forgive you, for you know not what you do!"

As much as I can be, with the interests of my own country always first in mind, I am for the League of Nations. But I have never fooled myself as to its immediately springing into an effective automatic machinery for the prevention of war. I have felt that we had better keep our army and navy up to full fighting strength until the miracle of the regeneration of human nature had already been enacted by some specific example from another nation before our eyes. The trouble with enthusiastic Leaguers is that they have oversold the League to themselves. And in the process of doing this they have over-kidded the American people—a dangerous thing to do. That is why men like Newton Baker and Franklin Roosevelt now see that no path to the White House passes by Geneva. Idealogues claimed too much in too short a time. They mistook steps successfully climbed towards a goal, for the attainment of the goal itself. Being an evolutionist, I cannot help having faith in the internationalism of the future. But the process of education to fit the world for it must go on for generations after we have passed from the scene. What is more preposterous than to suppose that at the end of a bloody and ruthless war, followed by a Shylock peace treaty, our League of Nations would make new wars impossible, and we could therefore all disarm!

The two Hague Conventions, drafted by international conferences and ratified by most nations during the fifteen years before the World War, were the twentieth century's initial contributions to international peace machinery. But the existence of these understandings did not deter Italy from seizing Turkey's last African province. I represented the *New York Herald* in that war and those that followed, culminating in the world-wide cataclysm. Neutral rights and rights of non-combatants were violated with impunity by the belligerents on land and sea. It got worse and worse as the World War was prolonged, and anyone who thinks that it was a case of white angels on one side and black devils on the other just wasn't there.

And all the peace notes, and all the notes concerning the legality of the interception of the commerce of neutrals at sea that were busily sent forth from our White House and our State Department, were brushed aside by the very officials who had sent them the moment we entered into the war. When we entered the World War it was different. It was not the same thing as it had been before. As a neutral we protested. As a belligerent we violated the principles of law as we understood them on land and sea in the same manner as those against whom we protested up to the time we entered the war.

But, and here comes the big but, the existence of the Hague Conventions and the Declaration of London (which England, however, had not ratified) made us think of moral obligations, although we repudiated them for the time being. We met force with force, and I suppose we'd have

been foolish had we tried any other tactics. Each side started a moral propaganda against the other, scoring treaty-breaking, violation of the rights of civilians or neutrals, methods of warfare renounced at the Hague, responsibility for starting the war, etc. The result of this was the slogan of "war to end war," and the desire to express lofty war aims—no annexations, no indemnities.

Enlightened (that is a little bit enlightened) public opinion compelled this effort to put the war on a high moral standard, and forced statesmen to incorporate the Covenant of the League of Nations in the treaties of the Paris settlement. Since the war, despite disappointments—disillusionments, one might say—we have had the efforts for limitation of armaments, partially successful, and the inconclusive land disarmament parleys. We have had the Briand-Kellogg Anti-War Pact. All these measures are a response to the popular demand for settlement of international disputes without recourse to arms.

If we did not expect too much of the League Covenant, if we do not expect too much of it now, if we have not jumped to conclusions as to the rights and wrongs of the Sino-Japanese imbroglio, if we have used past history as a corrective in our thinking upon the problems of today, we can be optimistic about our precious peace machinery. It didn't work. But we didn't think it would! It has had its use, however, in just being there. The Japanese could not ignore it, nor the well-nigh universal resentment aroused against them throughout the world as supposed aggressors. They certainly did blunder into the role of aggressors at Shanghai, however much that may not have been their intention.

It is not as easy now as it used to be to "get away with murder" anywhere in the world. That is the lesson of the early months of 1932. The League of Nations isn't dead. It has hardly begun to live. The food it has had in infancy has not been of the easily digestible sort. Colic pains were inevitable. But let us not despair! The Briand-Kellogg Pact will be taken as less of a joke from now on. And perhaps there was some real meaning in the phrases "territorial integrity of China" and "administrative entity of China" in the Nine-Power Pact. Perhaps Japan was wrong in assuming that they were the rubber-stamp phraseology of world politics jargon of former years. But whether they are to have real meaning to Japan and to the world, depends upon the ability of China to make a nation of herself, with a government responsible for whatever happens in any part of Chinese territory. Until China gets control of herself, repeated efforts will be made by other countries, not by Japan alone, to put an end to Chinese anarchy in those portions of China whose markets are indispensable, or simply just profitable, to them.

Any effort to coerce Japan, by boycott or armed force, would quickly

reveal conflict of interests among League members and Briand-Kellogg signatories, thus further discrediting our peace machinery.

The lesson to be learned from this crisis is that we need to study more penetratingly and objectively the causes of war. If we do this we shall realize that treaty engagements and peace machinery cannot be invoked in a changing world to maintain indefinitely the existing *status quo* for the benefit of a few lucky and privileged nations. We shall abandon pinning our faith to high-sounding formulae and begin to challenge tariffs and other trade restrictions, unreasonable immigration laws, and the existence of international financial obligations that cannot be settled. For these are the fundamental barriers to world peace.

THE CHAIRMAN: The next speaker will be Mr. Chester H. Rowell, Editor and Publisher of the Fresno Republican from 1898 to 1920. He has attended the biennial conferences of the Institute of Pacific Relations since its inception in 1925, acting as International Information Secretary in 1929 and 1931.

While in China last autumn, he made a special survey of conditions in Manchuria and was the first foreigner to reach Chinchow after the bombing by Japanese planes. It is a great pleasure for me to introduce Mr. Rowell. Mr. Rowell!

MR. CHESTER H. ROWELL

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS OF THE FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION: We are here to consider "whether or not the situation in the Far East imperils the peace machinery," and we have just heard that it does not imperil it because there would be no peril if it were destroyed. There isn't any peace machinery, anyway, and there isn't any crisis in the Far East. Assuming those facts, the conclusion would follow.

Unfortunately, the world has unanimously resolved that the facts are otherwise. We have been told that we do not know the facts. Some of them I, at least, do know because part of them I learned from my own eyesight on the ground where they happened, and the rest of them I learned upon the most excellent Japanese authority of the soldiers who were doing them, and of the government that was controlling them. Upon those authorities, I think I may say I know a portion of the facts.

At any rate, the League of Nations last night met with every significant nation on earth in it except that strange pair of mavericks, America and Russia, and those two were on the side lines agreeing. Every nation on

earth, including Japan, voted for a resolution that the Japanese troops should withdraw and not for a resolution that the "Japanese and Chinese troops" should withdraw.

So, at least in that conclusion, the judgment of the world is unanimous—based no doubt upon its unanimous ignorance and based no doubt upon the "special interests" which Belgium and Czechoslovakia and Switzerland, the three nations that spoke most bravely, have in Shanghai—based on those two cynical motives, the world unanimously judged that Japan shall get out of Shanghai, that it shall be paid nothing for doing so, that there shall be no conditions of its doing so, and no conditions imposed upon China for Japan's getting out.

It may be that the unanimous consent of mankind does not establish the truth. It may be that the subjective idealist philosophers are right, that the fact that I see you is no evidence that you are there. However, we have devised a practical working rule. If the human race unanimously sees a certain thing, then pragmatically we treat that thing as if it were reality, but if one of us sees something that nobody else can see, then pragmatically we treat that as if it were not reality. You see, I have not forgotten the lessons which I learned more than forty years ago from the eminent philosopher [John Dewey] at my side.

We are also told that Japan is innocent because we are guilty. I do not plead guilty to all of the charges that have been made against us, but if we were guilty of them all, it would be nothing to the point. There was a time when Americans were guilty of dueling and there may have been moral defense for that dueling, but there would be no defense either moral or legal for the same thing now.

The world does move and things which might be right or might be defensible or might be only tolerable and forgivable at one time, become impossible at other times. Julius Caesar was a great and a civilized warrior, yet he went across Europe conquering towns, and when he conquered a town he killed every old man in it and every worthless child and every old woman, and sold the rest into slavery. That was civilized warfare by the most civilized nation on earth then.

Read the old Testament and see the things that the Lord Jehovah was represented as commanding his troops to do. Satan would not be guilty now of the things that the chosen people once attributed to the Lord Jehovah.

So the world has moved and is still moving, and the identical question that is now being decided, for us, is whether or not the twentieth century has arrived. There was a nineteenth century and in the nineteenth century we did some things which can be described in the same words as some

things that have been happening lately. We have done things in South America and we have done things in China that can be described in identical words with the things Japan is now doing.

If you come up here and slap my face and I punch you in the nose, that is "self-defense." If somebody else comes up here and slaps my face, and I throw at him a dynamite bomb and blow up this hotel and all this company, that is "self-defense." Are the two transactions identical because the words are? That is the difference in what has happened across the sea. They can be described in the same words, but they are not the same transaction.

The further difference is stated in this very question which is before us. We ask whether the "peace machinery" is imperiled. That question could not have been asked in 1916 when we did right or wrong at Vera Cruz. There was no "peace machinery" to imperil, and the question which would mean one thing in 1916 meant at least in principle another thing after 1919.

We look over this nation and look upon the great State of California from which I came. Our only title to California is precisely the title which Japan has itself renounced to Manchuria. We took California by force of arms, and we own it. Japan by force of arms has taken Manchuria. It is there. It has it. And yet it itself tells us it does not own it.

That is the difference between the twentieth century and the nineteenth century, proclaimed by Japan itself. Why did Japan not claim that? For the sordid reasons of selfish national interests, the only reasons which are respectable? I think not. I think Japan did it because this is the twentieth century and there are some things you do not do in daylight.

One of the reasons for the saving of Japan's face at Shanghai is that the Japanese commander must go back to Japan and report to the Emperor and the Emperor must report to his ancestors, and finally at the shrine at Ise report to Amaterasu, the sun-goddess and ancestress of the ancestors. Now, you can report to Amaterasu that brave men stood their ground until they all died. You could not report to Amaterasu that men went there and found the job bigger than they thought it was, and therefore quit. You do not say that in the presence of the ages.

You do not say in the presence of the ages, "I think I am more important than other people. We think our generation counts more than the honor of our ancestors and the interest of our descendants." We may act that way most of the time, but we never say it in the presence of the goddess of the ages. Neither do we say it in the presence of mankind. The League of Nations provides that presence.

There have been accusations that Britain and France at the League of Nations were holding back, trying to prevent action; that they did not wish the Assembly to be called. But under the Covenant of the League of Nations, a "scrap of paper," when weak China said the League must come, Great Britain was not able to say it shall not come. And when the representatives of three militarily helpless nations yesterday got up and bravely challenged the assembled representatives of mankind to do their duty, John Simon dared hesitate only the fraction of one second before he was shamed into voting aye with all the rest of the world.

That is what daylight means. That is what it means to us. We have not been ashamed to demand in our treaty with Germany all of the rights under the Treaty of Versailles and take none of its duties. We have not been ashamed to join with Russia in being the only significant nation on earth unwilling to take part in the twentieth century organization of mankind. But when a practical thing came up to do, we did it. When there was a thing that needed to be done in concert, we did it in concert, and we did it the only way there was to do it. We walked to the only place there was to go, right into the League of Nations.

So, to that extent, the peace machinery of mankind has justified itself. It justified itself last night in the first bold step of the League of Nations, taken by the Assembly, because it was the Assembly, which the Council did not dare take because it was the Council. Machinery does make a difference.

That first step having been taken, and it is a step that involves neither boycott nor war nor coercion, Japan will yield to it or won't yield to it. The thing will be done or won't be done, but it has already been demonstrated that whatever has to be done, the weakest nation in the Assembly of the League of Nations will demand to be done, and the strongest nation won't dare to say no. Nor will we dare to say no when the question comes whether we will join with it. We all hope that the steps that have already been taken will be enough, but we must firmly resolve that whatever steps become necessary to be taken, we will take them with the rest of the world.

Let us consider first, the success of the peace machinery of mankind up to this point, and second, the calamity to mankind if in cynicism we give it up and say it cannot succeed. First its success! It has provided an assembly into which you did not have to negotiate the nations. One nation had the right to compel the rest of the world to come together, and they did come.

The Council, and now the Assembly, have been meeting practically continuously ever since those four feet of rail were cracked in Manchuria,—

and remember it was no "bridge," it was four feet of rail, partially cracked. I was there; I saw it; I know.

At that Assembly of the League of Nations continuously a curious performance has taken place. Each time anything happened, Japanese diplomats at Geneva said the right words and every time they said those right words, Japanese militarists, first in Manchuria and then in Shanghai, did the contrary deeds. The sum total of those deeds is now that Japan is in physical possession of Manchuria, that Japan is in physical possession of a zone around Shanghai which, if it kept it, would choke Shanghai from China and China from the sea. That is the sum total of those deeds.

But what is the sum total of those words? That Japan has announced a hundred times before the bar of history and at the tribunal of mankind that under those physical deeds it claims no title whatever. Possession without title, in the nature of things, cannot be permanent and will not be. When Japan finally walks out, it will say to the rest of us, "Why have you been making so much fuss? Here we are out. Here is the record of our words that said we would get out. We have done what we said we would do. Why fuss about it?"

And Japan's face will be abundantly saved by that course and would be totally lost by any other course. There is no question which they will do.

Going back, if the prophecy which I have just made is precarious, because the future tense always is, the past tense is not so uncertain, and the thing has happened. In 1899 after Europe had done things to which I do plead guilty, some of the things that were not on Dr. Gibbons' list; after they had deprived Japan of its rights; after Europe had taken the gates of China, and was in actual process of slicing up China into several spheres of influence, John Hay put his name on a scrap of paper and sent to these powers certain words to which they replied in certain other words, wholly inconsistent with their deeds. Those words overcame those deeds, and China was not sliced up. So we have historic evidence that words are important when they are solemnly said in the face of the assembled nations of mankind.

The League of Nations should not, as Dr. Gibbons has told us, be judged by the counsel of perfection. If the League of Nations has done only half well enough, that is twice as well as Congress usually does and yet nobody thinks of abolishing Congress or seceding from its government. The League of Nations up to this time has done fully half well enough.

If there had been in 1914, a League half as good as this, and it had done half as well as its most cynical enemy says it has done now, the war

between Austria and Serbia would have been localized and the great world explosion would not have taken place. It has not taken place in the Orient, though terrible things have taken place.

It would be a terrrible thing if one room in this hotel caught fire and burned up those that were in it, but if the Fire Department stopped it from spreading to the rest of the hotel, the Fire Department would have vindicated itself, and so far the League has done so.

Let us, however, consider what will happen if, after having halfway succeeded up to the present point, the League, and the rest of the machinery of which unlike the League, we are an acknowledged part, should surrender; should do the things that the cynics say it will do; should do the things that it would do if they were right in attributing to nations nothing but selfish motives. Then consider what the perils would be.

There would be, in the first place, an acknowledged breakdown of this machinery. If the machinery broke down in the Orient then things in the Orient would take their course. Let us say, if we like, that that is not our concern. But the breakdown of this machinery in Asia would mean also its breakdown in Europe. Whatever Japan would successfully have said and done to the peace machinery of the world, this time, Mussolini could say, and would, at some other time; or if he did not, then Pilsudski would, or Hitler or Stalin or whoever might be the successor of one of them in these or other nations. Some time, and that does not mean in the forty-eighth century, it means in the first half of the twentieth century, some one of them would say it. And if the machinery of the League of Nations, of the Locarno Treaty and of the Nine-Power Pact and of the Kellogg Pact should in the meantime have surrendered, the first time any dictator of Europe did in Europe that which Japan would have successfully done in Asia, Europe would blow up. One does not need to guess nor speculate upon whose roof the fragments would fall if Europe blew up. We have already had that experience.

That is one thing that would happen if in the second stage of the test of the League of Nations it did not do what it has halfway done in the first stage.

Here are some other things that would happen across the Pacific Ocean —and I am trying in each case to prove they would happen "to us," because there is a peculiar psychology prevalent among men. If I were to say as an individual, "I regard my interests as more than anybody else's interests; I will look out for my interests; I will do whatever I can for myself because I can and I care nothing for anybody's interests"—if I were to say that you would regard me as either a lunatic or a knave, and on either basis you would lock me up or refuse to associate with me as an uncivilized man unfit for your company.

However, if we change it from the first person singular to the first person plural, and say proudly "we" look out for "our" interests and for nothing else, then that doctrine of selfishness has attached to it the sacred name of patriotism. It gets the aura of a great and noble virtue, and we combine those compelling instincts of selfishness with the defense reactions of slogans of patriotism. Thus we proudly say as nations that which we would be ashamed to say, though we are not always ashamed to do, as individuals.

Very well—since that is the standard, let us take it. Let us assume that we do not care what happens unless it happens to us. What would and will happen in the Orient—to us, not to the Orient,—if this machinery breaks down?

One thing might happen, but is so remote, that we may remove it from the circle of practical consideration. It may happen when I leave this hotel that I may be run over by an automobile. That is possible, but it is so improbable that I conduct my life as if it could not happen. In the same sense, it is just remotely possible but enormously improbable that this explosion in the East will now spread over the world as it did in Europe in the World War.

I put that down as number one because it is remotely and hypothetically possible, but is so remotely improbable that we may for the moment remove it from our practical consideration. There are some things less improbable. One of them is the explosion of Europe, which I have just described.

Here are some other things that may happen on the Asiatic side of the world—but still happen "to us." Between 1895 and 1905 Japan learned a lesson from us about us, and that was that we would respect nothing but force. In those ten years the Japanese got the force, and then used it to defeat a great European nation of our race. They were promptly accepted by us, by the title of slaughter and conquest, into the fellowship of Christian nations.

If we teach China the lesson that you must rely upon your own fists, as Germany once tried to teach that lesson to the world (Germany knows better now), if we teach them that lesson, they may learn it, and enough harm as well as much good has come out of Japan's learning it, to challenge us whether we want China to learn it.

China will learn it to this extent: If China must rely on its own fists, China will spend the next ten years, the next twenty years, the next thousand years, if necessary, for China's measure of time is long, preparing to eject Japan from Manchuria by force. They say so. I have heard them say so to the Japanese. That would mean whenever they can do it. They cannot do it now, but they might be able to do it some day, and they would

be. That would mean something that probably would blow up into world war, and that is not one thousand years ahead, but probably only ten.

There is one other thing very much nearer than that, and that is if the course of the next few weeks or months, probably the next few days, makes China lose confidence in the Western world, China will turn westward toward the East as now it has been turning eastward toward the West. The world is astride a lever, a teeterboard. Russian civilization is at one end of it, and American and Western European civilization is at the other end of it. Which is the better end, I am not wise enough to know, but I know which is our end. I know, too, that it makes less difference who has the heavier weight than it does who has the longer arm of that lever.

China stands between, the custodian of the center of gravity of the earth, and China is in the throes of decision which way it will shift that center of gravity. China wishes to be a part of our family. If we kick it out of our family, China goes over, and goes over not in the year 1942, but in the year 1932, to the Russian side.

That does not mean that all of China will go Bolshevik in the sense of establishing a Socialist economy. That would probably be impossible in China, though it has been done completely in two provinces of China and partially in three provinces already. The Kuomintang, the ruling political party of China is divided into two wings, one of which is pro-Russian, and that wing is now half of the present government of China. China, if we desert it, will go Russianward this year, and the center of gravity of the world will be changed, with us on the down side. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have now come to the question period, the discussion period. You may put questions in either of two ways, either send them up to the Chairman in writing or put them from the floor. In either case please condense them into one short sentence, and if you put them from the floor, please speak loudly enough so the Chairman may hear them. They may be addressed to either one of the speakers.

MR. NORMAN HAPGOOD: I have carefully condensed my question into one sentence, but it is a long sentence. When Dr. Gibbons condensed his view of American public opinion into the personal example of two men, one of whom is likely to be President of the United States, I felt that it was so important that I wanted to be sure I understood him. This is my long question: *Did I understand you, Dr. Gibbons, to imply that Newton Baker in recently clarifying a distinction he has been making over a year, putting the blame on our own prejudice and declaring that he looked upon the League of Nations as the world's greatest hope, and would al-*

ways continue to agitate for our entry when we are able to see more clearly, and being the only presidential possibility who dares to come out for boycott, is to be classed with another presidential possibility who answered a threat, tried to make the answer secret, but was prevented, blamed other nations, and made a complete job of it by kicking the World Court?

THE CHAIRMAN: I am not sure Mr. Hapgood's long question is altogether in order, but if Dr. Gibbons is willing to answer it, I should be glad to have him do so.

DR. GIBBONS: You see, Mr. Hapgood is getting us into the Presidential campaign. I was not trying to draw any distinction between these two candidates for the Democratic nomination for President of the United States. What I said came immediately after the statement that the American people had been over-kidded and that it was dangerous to over-kid them.

I believe, as Mr. Baker does, in the League of Nations and its future. I believe, as he does, that the time is not yet ripe, for us to come into the League of Nations. I was not trying to imply at all that Mr. Baker had deserted the ideal of the League of Nations any more than I myself have deserted it, but I must refuse before this assembly to express any opinion that would make an invidious comparison between two eminent men who are both candidates for the highest office in the gift of our nation.

MR. COLT: I should like to ask Dr. Gibbons (in having to be brief I may not get it across) as to his statement that boycott is war and presumably as bad as what we consider generally as war. *Would that indicate that the tariffs that some of our countries make, which may bring certain communities into a serious situation, are also as bad as what is generally regarded as war?*

DR. GIBBONS: The question, as I see it, as to the statement I made that boycott in this present state of world interdependence is really war, was if I believed that the putting up of high tariffs also would lead to war.

The United States puts up tariffs, but not discriminatory tariffs. They are equal for all nations and other nations do the same thing. We have treaties of amity and commerce. I do not believe in high tariff. I never have done so since I have been studying international affairs. I believe in the long run the high tariff is one of the things that lead to war, but not in the same immediate way that the boycott would.

A boycott is established against one single nation, a nation with whom we might have, and in this case we do have, a treaty of amity and commerce, by which we guarantee to that nation equal rights in trade in the United States with all other nations. We do the same thing in our tariff.

If we join other nations in the imposition of a boycott on Japan, I believe that is tantamount to declaration of war and it is a war more cruel and more far-reaching than if we tried to send out cruisers and battleships to Far Eastern shores to attack Japan.

The nations of the world cannot in the present state of interdependence impose a boycott on any one nation. It is unsound economically and will always have to lead to declaration of war because the nation thus laid under interdict such as we had in medieval days, the interdicts of the popes, would have, as a question of its existence, either to abdicate its sovereignty and become a groveling thing before the other nations of the world, or, forced into a corner, to fight.

I have no doubt about what Japan would do under those conditions. She would go down fighting gloriously and hoping perhaps she could disrupt the opposition and get some nations on her side. I think a boycott leads to war. A high tariff is one of the disturbing barriers to world peace. That is quite a different thing from being a virtual declaration of war.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have a written question addressed to Mr. Rowell. *"Is China a nation?"*

MR. ROWELL: The most exciting remark made by anybody at the Institute of Pacific Relations when I was there was a remark by a Japanese which he promptly withdrew, though it was perfectly true. He said he was once talking to a British metaphysician who said that in terms of scholastic nominalism, China was not metaphysically a nation; that he himself had denied it but his British friend had maintained it. This was, in itself, a perfectly harmless and entirely correct remark; but because it included the phrase "is China a nation," it excited the Chinese more than the conquest of three provinces did. That is how jealous the Chinese are of that question.

China has been formally recognized as a nation by all of us. Juridically it is a nation. China is a nation in its own self-confidence. China, until it was disrupted by recent events, came nearer to being a nation in government than it had been for many, many years, but it was not very near to it then.

China can live without government or with little government as no other people on earth can do, and the question whether China's nationality is embodied in government is a relatively unimportant question.

Here is another thing: In every schoolhouse in China, in every office in China, every man, every literate person in China recites every Monday morning the will of Sun Yat-sen. Every person in China who can read reads the San Min Chu-I. These have become the Holy Scriptures of China, infallible and inerrant, and they contain the doctrine of radical

nationalism. The articulate part of China, whether it is a million or five million, is the only part that for this purpose counts, and it is radically nationalistic.

So, by all other tests than that of the government, China is a nation, and by the test which in China is relatively unimportant, that of government, China was nearer to it than it had ever been before, and on the way toward it when it was disrupted by recent events.

QUESTION: *I should like to ask Mr. Rowell to express an opinion on the question of boycott, to which Dr. Gibbons has addressed himself.*

MR. ROWELL: As one of the original eight signers of that petition, I have had some occasion to consider this question. The petition itself, in the first place, did not propose any boycott. It did not propose that the United States should boycott Japan, or ask anybody else to do so. It did not envisage that the League of Nations would necessarily or even probably do so. It merely undertook to prepare American opinion to support the government of the United States in a policy of cooperation toward whatever might be agreed upon by the remainder of mankind, including, if necessary, the boycott.

That boycott, if done, will be done unanimously. We thought it would be, not a step toward war, but probably the only step from war that would be possible, in an extreme emergency. The boycott is, to be sure, a step of coercion. The boycott when used upon Germany starved women and children. The boycott if used upon Japan will starve nobody. It will make nobody go hungry. There is plenty of food in Japan and accessible to Japan, and Japan would find means of getting that food to all its people.

What it would do would be to make Japan industrially and financially incapable of conducting war, and thus it would by coercion bring Japan to peace. It would do it by an unfortunate coercion which nobody wants, but it may be better to risk that than the other thing. It may be cheaper for America to give up a few millions in silk and cotton trade than to invest many billions in additional armaments anl lose many more billions in endangering the peace structure of the world.

QUESTION: *Does it follow from Mr. Rowell's inference that world conditions have so changed as to make forceful, imperialistic aggression outside the pale, that future activity on the part of the United States in, let us say, Nicaragua, shall be subject to League intervention?*

MR. ROWELL: If future activities of the United States in Latin America were the sort that Japan has done in China, I hope so. They have never been of that sort. We have done things in Central America which may or may not be right, but which, at least, are different.

THE CHAIRMAN: While you are thinking of a good question to ask, I would call your attention to the fact that at the speaker's table we have a well-known political philosopher. He is Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University, and President of the People's Lobby and author of "Democracy and Education," "The Public and Its Problems," and other works. Dr. John Dewey!

DR. JOHN DEWEY

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS: I confess to a little surprise at one of Dr. Gibbons' remarks when he said that he was an evolutionist because if I understood the logic of his remarks, it was that because certain things had happened internationally, they were bound to continue to happen. I do not see the evolution in that logic.

I was very glad, however, that he gave this recital of the imperialistic acts of other countries and of the United States, and if there are those in the audience who needed instruction on that point, I sincerely hope that they learned the lesson.

But independently of whether wrongs in the past justify continuation of similar wrongs on a larger scale, there are those, both individuals and peace organizations, who have protested continously against this policy of their own country. One reason that I hoped our State Department would get busy during the Manchurian phase of the situation, either under the Nine-Power Pact or the Paris Peace Pact, was that it would give a precedent to some other nation to raise the question of what we were doing in Nicaragua.

I still hope that events will shape themselves so that other nations can raise a question about what we are doing, and I think all those who have stood for this policy in the past need not have any troubled consciences in continuing to protest against what Japan has been doing on a larger scale in the Far East.

There is one other point that occurs to me, based on the Chairman's remarks about the three motor cars of different powers. Not being committed by anything in the past to an apology for the League of Nations, I am frank to say that I think the peace machinery of the world has been imperiled, not completely broken down, but still seriously imperiled.

One reason is that these different cars, these three motor cars, if they have not actually collided with each other, have at least succeeded more or less in stalling each other, so that the nations of the world, including our own State Department, have been in very great doubt as to which car to get into. A great many of the nations have been engaged in going

from one car to the other and they have spent so much time in that, that there has not been the unity of policy that there should have been. It has been that fact which, in my judgment, more than anything, that has given Japan its chance.

It may be true that the Paris Pact did not tell how its principle was to be carried out. The trouble with the Covenant of the League of Nations was that it did tell, but it told in terms that the nations of the earth never meant to carry out, and are not now willing to carry out; namely, the use not merely of economic sanctions, but of military sanctions. Article XVI of the Covenant stands definitely in the way of solidarity of action under the Paris Pact.

If the nations of the world had agreed to stake their whole case upon the moral issue raised by the Peace Pact and to hold Japan to the terms of the Peace Pact absolutely by means of the moral force of the world, and had not allowed these other negotiations and side issues to come in the way, I think we should have had less imperiling of the peace machinery of the world than we actually have had.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am going to ask Dr. Gibbons if he would like to say a few words in answer.

DR. GIBBONS: Eminent philosopher though he is, our honored guest, Professor Dewey, I believe, is not as much of a political evolutionist as I am. I still maintain that I am an evolutionist, but I believe in the evolution of other nations as well as the evolution of my own. In past history we see lessons, that are being learned at the present time, of the inevitable expansion of all nations. Given the same conditions, the same increase of population, the same dependence upon foreign markets, they are going to do the same things we did in order to attain their aims. Regrettable though that may be, it is a fact.

The great difficulty with the believers in these peace pacts and their acting automatically is that they have a philosophy very much like the Metternichian philosophy existing from 1815 to 1848 in Europe. It was said in 1815 after the Napoleonic Wars that Europe had arrived at the ideal state, and that all nations should combine together to prevent revolution in any state. That was to prevent the progress of humanity toward democracy. Today we have had the example of certain nations for certain reasons in the past being able to progress and evolve until they have become rich and powerful and strong with enormous territories in all parts of the world, plenty of markets, raw materials, access to the foodstuffs, while other nations have not had that opportunity.

The question before us is the question, really in all this, of the *status quo*. Are we going to preserve the *status quo* as it is? As I said in my

initial remarks, the *status quo* is advantageous to certain nations, and disadvantageous to others. We say today, law, not war. Why? Because in the past through war we have gained a situation that is so advantageous that now we want to invoke law. Other nations have not evolved as far as we have and they are in the process of evolution.

Japan has to find foodstuffs. Despite what Mr. Rowell said about Japan having plenty of foodstuffs at home, I beg to differ on that point. Japan has to find markets. Her greatest market is peaceful China, and I believe we cannot any of us, nations who have attained all we can hope to want with our barns full, our enormous territories, fencing it off against other nations by high tariffs and immigration restrictions, sit now and say: "Our fathers fought, they broke the peace, but now we have different standards of morality." We have kept the advantages of that past sinning, it is true, but because we have reached a higher stage of morality now we are going to maintain the *status quo* that is established forever as it is today, and anyone who breaks it is a violator of law and morality.

I believe in the evolution of other nations as well as of my own.

I do not believe civilization is static. I do not believe the progress of nations has ceased, and the world is now static. Therefore, I say still I am an evolutionist.

THE CHAIRMAN: Here is another written question addressed to Mr. Rowell. *What do you think of the chances of unity in China? What about Chiang Kai-shek?*

MR. ROWELL: That would involve a long lecture for which there is no time. As to the chances of unity in China, moral unity is already to a very considerable extent achieved. Political unity was nearer to being achieved in the last two years than at any other time since the revolution. I think that giving China not centuries nor long decades, but a relatively brief time of sufficient peace so that it can put its house in order, political unity is in sight, or was. Also, as I pointed out, political unity in China is less important to its nationalism than it is in any other country in the world. China can exist as a nation, if necessary, with no government at all, and that can be said of no other country in the world.

As to Chiang Kai-shek, I do not want to exalt him too much above his kind, and the kind is a bad kind, but I think he is the best of it. He is a remarkable soldier. On top of that he is what most war lords in China are not—he is a statesman and he is a patriot. I say that upon the basis of my own personal impression of the man.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have a written question addressed to Dr. Gibbons. *How does he envisage changing the status quo?*

DR. GIBBONS: That certainly is a very tall order to ask. How do I

envisage changing the *status quo?* Of course, we are limited here to a minute and a half or two minutes. I cannot possibly answer that question in that length of time. I can only say this: We who have evolved should be more charitable in regard to those who are in the process of evolving, and during that period of their evolving we should not put barriers in their way any more than we possibly can help doing.

We need, I think, to revise our whole political thinking regarding the barriers of tariffs, as I said, barriers of immigration, and the ban against entering colonizing areas for nations that haven't any colonizing area, equal rights in all markets of the world. The best way we could do that, of course, would be by cooperation and not by persisting in the policy of closing the door and of blocking the way of expansion to other nations.

Taking as a complete example the situation in China, I believe what we need to do there is to realize the tremendous importance of China as a market for Japan, and we should, instead of trying to block Japan in the Chinese market, try to cooperate with her, all nations should try to cooperate with her, to bring about order and unity in China so that the people there, who are a very industrious people, might develop into the market they could become.

There are certain things we could do in changing the *status quo* in a peaceful way, but we must educate ourselves not to look too much to our own selfish interests, but have really a world point of view. And that world point of view is not to be gained by too great a dependence upon panaceas and automatically-working machinery for peace.

THE CHAIRMAN: Someone asks Mr. Rowell to comment on the principle announced in Secretary Stimson's letter to Senator Borah.

MR. ROWELL: First, I should make a slight correction that has been called to my attention. When I spoke of Professor Takayanagi's remarks, I spoke of him as quoting "a British metaphysician." It was a British lawyer, talking metaphysics.

On the principle of Secretary Simson's note, so far as that note reiterates the principle of his note of January 7, it seems to me it is one of the major events in the history of international relations. It has reversed, or taken the first step toward reversing, the oldest and most vital principle of international law. It has always been domestic law that a contract under duress is void. It has always been international law that a treaty under duress is good. The reason was because duress between individuals was wrong, and no rights could be based upon that wrong, but duress between nations was their highest right and rights based on it had the highest title.

The Kellogg Pact having reversed that theory, and having made the use of war as an instrument of national policy an international wrong, Mr.

Stimson announces that we will not recognize any rights gained by that wrong and proposes that the rest of the world join in that policy. The rest of the world in principle has approved it. The rest of the world has not yet joined in action in announcing that it would be their policy, but it is likely soon to do so.

On the other half of Secretary Stimson's note—just who wrote that half, I am not so sure—the implied threat that if Japan does not carry out its half of the implied obligations of the treaties of 1922, whose interrelation he asserts and Japan denies, we will not carry out our half either and that we will build up our navies and fortify our outposts—I judge that is exceedingly popular.

It is easy to think old thoughts and hard to think new ones. Consequently the old thought of military threat is easy and makes the blood pressure rise. It is easy to think of spending billions on armaments. We are used to it. It is hard to think of sacrificing millions in business. We are not used to it. That part of it may have been good tactics at the moment. I hope it won't be policy for the future.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have two questions addressed to Mr. Rowell. They are so similar that I will put one of them. *How does Mr. Rowell envisage a China that could get along without a government, and how are powers in such case to deal with China?*

MR. ROWELL: If China had no government at all, the outside powers could not deal with it. China did have nothing that functioned for purposes of government, sometimes for centuries, and the powers did not deal with it. So, so long as China as a member of the family of nations is dealing with us, it must have government. If China is to have governmental railroads, it must have government. If China is to do any of the modern things we do with government, China must have government. My generalization, like all generalizations, was too general.

But the Chinese have developed a way of life, under which most of the things that we do by government they do in other ways, and that includes all the old things of China. China could live indefinitely the old way whether it had any government or not. Since it must now live with us, it must have government to deal with us.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have another question. *Will Dr. Gibbons elucidate his statement that other nations might cooperate with Japan in obtaining her necessary markets in China? If not by peaceful means, does he mean by bullets and bombs?*

DR. GIBBONS: Mr. Rowell has about answered this very question in what he said, in which I am in full agreement. What we need in China is

a stable government that has to deal with the world as it is today, if China intends to remain in communication with the rest of the world, a stable government that will actually exercise administrative authority over all parts of the country, that will make treaties with other nations and abide by those treaties.

The most important treaties in the world today are the treaties of amity and commerce between nations. What we need in China today is a government strong enough to enforce such treaty obligations of China in her relations with Japan. All that Japan asks for is the right to do business and trade in China by peaceable means.

I am afraid that it is not clearly understood that the boycott such as we have today in China, against which Japan complained and which was the cause of her intervention at Shanghai, is not a boycott of Japanese goods or foreign goods in general. It is the same thing as far as the great bulk of Chinese are concerned. It is not a boycott by the Chinese people who would still want to buy, but a boycott by committees, having in some cases the power of life and death, who have intimidated the Chinese merchants in various cities.

It is perfectly evident that the Chinese people as a whole throughout China want to trade and are perfectly willing to trade with Japan or any other foreign nation in the articles that are very acceptable to them. They want to sell; they want to buy. But no other nation in the world tolerates irresponsible committees under government patronage and government encouragement in some cases, such as have been in China for years.

Let me say that Japan has not been the worst sufferer. Great Britain has been a far worse sufferer in this kind of boycott of goods in China than the Japanese. It is for that reason that Sir John Simon hesitated at Geneva yesterday. The British government has had sympathy with the Japanese in the aims they are trying to make prevail at Shanghai and wants a China willing to buy their goods.

American merchants and people doing business in China all feel the same way. What we want to do and see is a Chinese government that will protect the interests of foreign trade, not Japanese trade alone, and by the cooperation of all nations that can be secured certainly by peaceful means and not by bullets, as the question implied.

QUESTION: *Would it not be preferable, instead of boycott which is an ex parte proceeding, to first procure agreement that, if a nation refuses to submit its differences to arbitration, non-intercourse as a decree of a tribunal should be pronounced against it?*

MR. ROWELL: That is the exact provision in the League of Nations Covenant, and is the exact course which we favor.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is time for one more short question.

DR. DEWEY: *I should like to ask Dr. Gibbons whether he thinks the policy of Japan since the issuing of the Twenty-One Demands and other matters of policy that have followed, has had a tendency to create a unified government in China, or to divide China and keep the series of weak and contending governments, also whether the boycott was not the direct result of the Twenty-One Demands.*

DR. GIBBONS: I believe the boycott was the result of the Twenty-One Demands. Similarly the boycott against England was the result of the desire to do away with extraterritoriality and I think the action of Japan in presenting the Twenty-One Demands and all Japan has done since, has had a tendency to unify at times the Chinese parties into a national government, but unfortunately the ambitions of the various Chinese chieftains as revealed recently at Shanghai have proved too great for the movement of unity among the Chinese people up to the present time.

I do not want to be understood in any way as approving of the actions of Japan or any other power in China in the course of the last twenty years. I am not approving; I am not excusing; I am only explaining.

THE CHAIRMAN: On your behalf I extend our thanks to the speakers, and declare the meeting adjourned.

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